

Message Text

SECRET

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11
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8394

S E C R E T MEXICO 14018

EXDIS

PASS ALSO DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR MX
SUBJECT: FUTURE OF DRUG ERADICATION PROGRAM

REF STATE 253659

1. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, MISSION RECOMMENDS THAT WE NOT RPT NOT REQUEST PRESENT AG TO INTERCEDE WITH HIS SUCCESSOR TO RETAIN ALEJANDRO GERTZ AND HIS ASSOCIATES THROUGH APRIL. MISSION RECOMMENDATION BASED ON FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) GOM MAY, ON ITS OWN, DECIDE TO KEEP GERTZ IN CHARGE OF ERADICATION PROGRAM. TO DO SO AFTER OUR REQUEST WOULD MAKE GERTZ EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH THAN HE NOW IS.

(B) EVEN THOUGH GERTZ AND HIS KEY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES MAY DEPART DEC. 1, THE WORKING LEVEL STAFF (CHIEF OF MAINTENANCE, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, ZONE COORDINATORS ETC) WOULD NOT NORMALLY MOVE BECAUSE OF CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION, NOR WOULD WE EXPECT PILOTS AND MECHANICS TO LEAVE. THUS, PEOPLE IN FIELD WHO ACTUALLY KILL POPPIES WOULD REMAIN.

(C) AS WASHINGTON IS WELL AWARE, WE HAVE BASIC PROBLEMS WITH AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION WHICH WILL REQUIRE HARD MANAGEMENT DECISIONS TO CORRECT. IF WE WERE TO ASK THAT PRESENT MANAGEMENT REMAIN, THERE IS EVERY LIKELIHOOD THAT THESE ESSENTIAL DECISIONS WILL BE POSTPONED EITHER TO PROTECT REPUTATIONS OR TO MAINTAIN STATUS QUO UNTIL NEW MANAGEMENT CAN DECIDE HOW IT WANTS TO RUN THINGS.

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(D) IF CHANGE IS EVENTUALLY INEVITABLE, BETTER WE GET IT

BEHIND US AND BEGIN TO ADAPT TO WHATEVER CONDITIONS WE
WILL FACE OVER NEXT FEW YEARS.

2. IN MAKING THIS RECOMMENDATION, WE REALIZE THAT CHANGE
NOW WILL HAVE SOME NEGATIVE IMPACT ON CURRENT ERADICATION
PROGRAM. HOWEVER, CURRENT MOMENTUM SHOULD CARRY PROGRAM THROUGH
DEC. 15, WHEN ERADICATION EFFORTS CLOSES DOWN FOR HOLIDAYS,
LEAVING ALMOST SIX WEEKS TO EDUCATE NEW ADMINISTRATION BEFORE
CAMPAIGN RESTARTS IN MID-JANUARY. WE HAVE PRESIDENT-
ELECT'S COMMITMENT TO ERADICATION PROGRAM AND THEREFORE,
HAVE SOME LEVERAGE TO USE TO SPUR NEW MANAGEMENT TO ACTION.

3. WE WOULD ALSO EXPECT OJEDA PAULLADA TO RETAIN HIS INTEREST
IN NARCOTICS EFFORT AFTER HE MOVES TO GOVERNACION, ALTHOUGH
HE WOULD HAVE NO DIRECT LINE RELATIONSHIP WITH PROGRAM. WE
ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE COULD CALL UPON HIM SHOULD NEED ARISE.
CALDERHEAD

SECRET

NNN

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